

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

MARQUISE D. WILLIAMS,

Plaintiff,

-against-

OFFICER SALVUCCI #531; SERGEANT
CIMORELLI; CARL E. DUBOIS, SHERIFF;
KENNETH T. JONES, UNDERSHERIFF;
MELE,

Defendants.

20-CV-5098 (CS)

ORDER OF SERVICE

CATHY SEIBEL, United States District Judge:

Plaintiff, currently detained at Orange County Jail, brings this *pro se* action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging that Defendants failed to protect him from a serious risk of harm. By order dated July 6, 2020, the Court granted Plaintiff's request to proceed without prepayment of fees, that is, *in forma pauperis* (IFP).¹

STANDARD OF REVIEW

The Prison Litigation Reform Act requires that federal courts screen complaints brought by prisoners who seek relief against a governmental entity or an officer or employee of a governmental entity. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). The Court must dismiss a prisoner's IFP complaint, or any portion of the complaint, that is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B), 1915A(b); *see Abbas v. Dixon*, 480 F.3d 636, 639

¹ Prisoners are not exempt from paying the full filing fee even when they have been granted permission to proceed *in forma pauperis*. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1).

(2d Cir. 2007). The Court must also dismiss a complaint if the court lacks subject matter jurisdiction. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(h)(3).

While the law mandates dismissal on any of these grounds, the Court is obliged to construe *pro se* pleadings liberally, *Harris v. Mills*, 572 F.3d 66, 72 (2d Cir. 2009), and interpret them to raise the “strongest [claims] that they suggest,” *Triestman v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons*, 470 F.3d 471, 474 (2d Cir. 2006) (internal quotation marks and citations omitted) (emphasis in original). But the “special solicitude” in *pro se* cases, *id.* at 475 (citation omitted), has its limits – to state a claim, *pro se* pleadings still must comply with Rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which requires a complaint to make a short and plain statement showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.

The Supreme Court has held that under Rule 8, a complaint must include enough facts to state a claim for relief “that is plausible on its face.” *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007). A claim is facially plausible if the plaintiff pleads enough factual detail to allow the Court to draw the inference that the defendant is liable for the alleged misconduct. In reviewing the complaint, the Court must accept all well-pleaded factual allegations as true. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678-79 (2009). But it does not have to accept as true “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action,” which are essentially just legal conclusions. *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555. After separating legal conclusions from well-pleaded factual allegations, the Court must determine whether those facts make it plausible – not merely possible – that the pleader is entitled to relief. *Id.*

DISCUSSION

A. Claims Against Supervisory Defendants

To state a claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege facts showing the defendant’s direct and personal involvement in the alleged constitutional deprivation. *See*

Spavone v. N.Y. State Dep't of Corr. Serv., 719 F.3d 127, 135 (2d Cir. 2013) (citing *Colon v. Coughlin*, 58 F.3d 865, 873 (2d Cir. 1995)). A defendant may not be held liable under § 1983 solely because that defendant employs or supervises a person who violated the plaintiff's rights. *See. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 676 ("Government officials may not be held liable for the unconstitutional conduct of their subordinates under a theory of *respondeat superior*."). An individual defendant can be personally involved in a § 1983 violation if:

- (1) the defendant participated directly in the alleged constitutional violation,
- (2) the defendant, after being informed of the violation through a report or appeal, failed to remedy the wrong,
- (3) the defendant created a policy or custom under which unconstitutional practices occurred, or allowed the continuance of such a policy or custom,
- (4) the defendant was grossly negligent in supervising subordinates who committed the wrongful acts, or
- (5) the defendant exhibited deliberate indifference to the rights of [the plaintiff] by failing to act on information indicating that unconstitutional acts were occurring.

Colon, 58 F.3d at 873.²

Plaintiff does not allege any facts showing how the supervisory defendants – Sheriff Carl Dubois, Undersheriff Kenneth T. Johnson, and “Orange County Jail Colonel Mele” – were personally involved in the events underlying his claims. Plaintiff therefore does not state a claim against these defendants in their personal capacities. He also does not allege any facts showing that a policy or custom of Orange County caused a violation of his rights, *see Cash v. Cnty. of Erie*, 654 F.3d 324, 333 (2d Cir. 2011), and thus does not state a claim against these defendants in their official capacities. Plaintiff's claims against Defendants Dubois, Johnson, and Mele are therefore dismissed for failure to state a claim on which relief may be granted. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).

² “Although the Supreme Court's decision in [*Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662 (2009)] may have heightened the requirements for showing a supervisor's personal involvement with respect to certain constitutional violations,” the Second Circuit has not yet examined that issue. *Grullon v. City of New Haven*, 720 F.3d 133, 139 (2d Cir. 2013).

B. Service on Defendants Salvucci and Cimorelli

Because Plaintiff has been granted permission to proceed IFP, he is entitled to rely on the Court and the U.S. Marshals Service to effect service. *Walker v. Schult*, 717 F.3d. 119, 123 n.6 (2d Cir. 2013); *see also* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) (“The officers of the court shall issue and serve all process . . . in [IFP] cases.”); Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(c)(3) (the court must order the Marshals Service to serve if the plaintiff is authorized to proceed IFP)). Although Rule 4(m) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure generally requires that the summons and complaint be served within 90 days of the date the complaint is filed, Plaintiff is proceeding IFP and could not have served the summons and complaint until the Court reviewed the complaint and ordered that a summons be issued. The Court therefore extends the time to serve until 90 days after the date the summonses are issued. If the complaint is not served within that time, Plaintiff should request an extension of time for service. *See Meilleur v. Strong*, 682 F.3d 56, 63 (2d Cir. 2012) (holding that it is the plaintiff’s responsibility to request an extension of time for service); *see also Murray v. Pataki*, 378 F. App’x 50, 52 (2d Cir. 2010) (“As long as the [plaintiff proceeding IFP] provides the information necessary to identify the defendant, the Marshals’ failure to effect service automatically constitutes ‘good cause’ for an extension of time within the meaning of Rule 4(m).”).

To allow Plaintiff to effect service on Correction Officer Salvucci, Badge #531, and Sergeant Cimorelli through the U.S. Marshals Service, the Clerk of Court is instructed to fill out a U.S. Marshals Service Process Receipt and Return form (“USM-285 form”) for each of these defendants. The Clerk of Court is further instructed to issue summonses and deliver to the Marshals Service all the paperwork necessary for the Marshals Service to effect service upon these defendants.

Plaintiff must notify the Court in writing if his address changes, and the Court may dismiss the action if Plaintiff fails to do so.

C. Local Civil Rule 33.2

Local Civil Rule 33.2, which requires defendants in certain types of prisoner cases to respond to specific, court-ordered discovery requests, applies to this action. Those discovery requests are available on the Court's website under "Forms" and are titled ["Plaintiff's Local Civil Rule 33.2 Interrogatories and Requests for Production of Documents."](#) Within 120 days of service of the complaint, Defendants must serve responses to these standard discovery requests. In their responses, Defendants must quote each request verbatim.³

CONCLUSION

The Clerk of Court is directed to mail a copy of this order to Plaintiff, together with an information package. The Court dismisses Plaintiff's claims against Sheriff Carl Dubois, Undersheriff Kenneth T. Johnson, and "Orange County Jail Colonel Mele." *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).

The Clerk of Court is further instructed to complete the USM-285 forms with the addresses for Correction Officer Salvucci, Badge #531, and Sergeant Cimorelli and deliver to the U.S. Marshals Service all documents necessary to effect service.

Local Civil Rule 33.2 applies to this action.

The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) that any appeal from this order would not be taken in good faith, and therefore *in forma pauperis* status is denied for the purpose of an

³ If Plaintiff would like copies of these discovery requests before receiving the responses and does not have access to the website, Plaintiff may request them from the Pro Se Intake Unit.

appeal. *Cf. Coppedge v. United States*, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962) (holding that an appellant demonstrates good faith when he seeks review of a nonfrivolous issue).

SO ORDERED.

Dated: July 7, 2020
White Plains, New York

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Seibel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CATHY SEIBEL
United States District Judge

DEFENDANTS AND SERVICE ADDRESSES

1. Correction Officer Salvucci, Badge #531
Orange County Jail
110 Wells Farm Road
Goshen, NY 10924
2. Sergeant Cimorelli
Orange County Jail
110 Wells Farm Road
Goshen, NY 10924